

May 4, 2018

HEALTHY OKALOOSA PARTNERS AND PARTICIPANTS RECOGNIZED

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Ft. Walton Beach, Fla. — The Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa) and the Healthy Okaloosa Collaborative began working in 2011 to address the health needs in our communities. Worksites, schools, childcare centers, summer care, Okaloosa Tobacco Free Partnership as well as Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) were recently recognized for their 2017 successes.

"We truly are making progress and we greatly appreciate the dedication of time, talent and passion of these partners and participants. These awards are a small recognition for the huge achievements we have seen this year, at these schools, daycares and businesses. These efforts have a clear impact on the health and well-being of our children and communities," exclaimed Dr. Karen Chapman, director DOH-Okaloosa. "The opportunity for health begins with our families, neighborhoods, schools and jobs, and is a direct reflection on the county in which we have chosen to live."

Healthy Okaloosa participants and partners were recognized for promoting health and the 5210 message, eat five or more fruits and vegetables every day, limit recreational screen time to two hours or less each day, be physically active at least one hour every day and cut back on sugar sweetened beverages. Participants and partners also encourage and support breastfeeding and strive to eliminate the use of and exposure to nicotine and tobacco products. Awards highlight activities such as hosting and promoting health events, planting gardens, environmental changes, curriculum changes, and overall promotion of health and wellness in their facilities. Some businesses and industry partners also implemented smoke free policies or set aside space for breastfeeding employees.

Outstanding Partners and Community Health Improvement Plan Champions were recognized for their overwhelming support and dedication to making Okaloosa County a healthier place to live, learn, work and play. The 2017 Outstanding Partner of the Year is Healthy Start of Okaloosa and Walton County, for their unwavering support of the Florida Healthy Babies Initiative and the Recipe for a Healthy Baby promotion.

Overall, 19 schools were certified or re-certified in 2017-18, 6 summer care sites and 12 businesses/industry. For more information about Healthy Okaloosa, contact DOH-Okaloosa at HealthyOkaloosa5210@flhealth.gov or visit www.HealthyOkaloosa.com anytime.

(Please see attached awards list.)

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. **For more information about the Florida Department of Health, please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov, [@HealthyFla](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla).**